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tains a summary of an interesting contract for the establishment of a mercantile and banking house in London, dated 1446. Cosimo de' Medici and Giovanni Benci are the parties of the first part, and their London agent or partner is of the second. Another document, taken like this one from the Florentine archives, contains instructions to guide the agent, and affords interesting glimpses into the methods of business and wide ramifications of the Italian banking houses.

In the main Mr. Einstein has succeeded in accomplishing what he undertook and has presented us with a useful summary of his subject. The book is provided with an index, some excellent illustrations in photogravure, and is comparatively free from errors of fact or print. A few slips, however, should be noted. The pope of the Renaissance was Paul II., not Paul I. (p. 23). The characterization of Rizzio as "prime minister of Scotland" (p. 76) is not altogether accurate. Finally the statement that Sebastian Cabot "commanded the first English ship to visit the West Indies and South America" (p. 278) would scarcely be made by any one conversant with the Cabot literature of the last twenty years.

SAMUEL B. HARDING.

Mary Queen of Scots and Who Wrote the Casket Letters? By SAMUEL COWAN. (New York: James Pott and Co. 1901. Two vols., pp. viii, 387; 407.)

THE strife which raged around Mary Stuart did not cease with her life; she lives on, an immortal subject of dispute between her ardent, uncompromising admirers and champions, and those who fail either to be dazzled by her brightness or to mistake tragic misfortune endured with marvelous spirit and steadfastness for snow-white innocence. Between the extremes of complete, unquestioning apology and of utter condemnation there is, however, ample room for sympathetic, though open-minded and unbiased discussion. For even those who approach the subject with the absolutely frank, honest and unfettered design to discover the truth will probably find it impossible to agree fully upon a solution of the more important historical riddles of her career. So that, when much remains really and honestly obscure and capable of various interpretation, it is scarcely wonderful that partizanship has run so high, considering that the question involves so much that appeals not only to British politics, patriotism, and religion, but to universal sympathies, which have naturally ever gone out to the almost incredibly tragic life of a beautiful, lovable, high-spirited, if guilty queen.

The latest knight to enter the lists against all who dare whisper aught against the Queen of Scots is Mr. Cowan, himself a Scotsman. His two handsome volumes are an uncompromising defense, a popular biography, based ostensibly upon a study of good historical materials both original and second-hand, but giving, it is to be feared, decided if not exclusive preference to evidence which tells in Mary's favor. In fact the book is hardly to be taken seriously as a real contribution to history,

though it is evidently intended as such. It is obviously a labor of love, the pious, enthusiastic work of a chivalrous, patriotic Scot, whose soul boils at the thought of the diabolical wrongs done the living Queen by her political enemies and to her memory by cold-blooded if not dishonest historians. The author's task has thus been not so much with laborious patience to inform himself if possible beyond his predecessors with a view to enlightened and authoritative judgment, as to place before his readers a narrative which, aided by passionate appeal for sympathy and noisy denunciation of slanderers, shall convert men to a set of Marian dogmas which he has apparently never been able or willing to regard for a moment as susceptible of honest doubt. In a word he is not a trained historian, not even a competent amateur. It is not to be expected that a task which taxed to the utmost the resources and trained faculties of a Mignet, should be creditably performed by so casual a writer.

If an author makes no pretense to be an impartial judge, he ought at least to prove himself a competent advocate. It is to be feared, however, that Mr. Cowan is neither the one nor the other. His is a book, not, as he evidently thinks and intends, suitable to rank with the scholarly defenses of Mary Stuart, but rather a book for that vague and presumably uncritical person, the general reader. But all this is merely saying that Mr. Cowan's is a bad book if judged from a strict historical standpoint, and scarcely calls for serious consideration in an historical review.

Still as the book is imposing in bulk and alluring in appearance, and as the author challenges the serious attention of critics by claiming to throw "new light on questions of great historical interest," it is but fair to give a few explicit reasons for our unfavorable judgment. First of all as the authorship of the Casket letters is so prominent on the title-page one would have expected that problem to occupy a considerable part of the book, as in Mr. Andrew Lang's recent acute and painstaking volume, which, by the way, gives the scholar such infinite relief and satisfaction after the inadequate, all too complacent work of his fellow-countryman. As a matter of fact Mr. Cowan has very little to say about the perhaps insoluble enigma of the letters, and that little is not very enlightening or convincing. It is amusing in this connection to contrast Mr. Cowan's cock-sure dictum that they are forgeries and "not the work of genius, but coarse incoherent pieces of composition" with Mr. Lang's modest and reverent judgment, that if the famous crucial Letter II. "be in part, at least, a forgery," it is "a forgery by a master in the science of human nature," and seemingly "beyond the power of the Genius of Forgery to produce." Mr. Cowan is not a good student of evidence. "Many of his criticisms," to use the words of that great Scottish authority, Dr. Hay Fleming, "are of the most puerile nature, and he has perfect faith in theories which have been long exploded." The same authority points out the textual inaccuracy of the many documents which Mr. Cowan has published, and notes that the original bond for Riccio's murder, which Mr. Cowan claims to have discovered and published for

the first time, was printed from the original with facsimiles of the signatures in 1843. It is needless to multiply instances.

The most valuable feature of Mr. Cowan's book is the series of sixteen portraits of Mary. One would like, however, to find critical notes on them, for, strictly speaking, portraits, to be useful historical material, should be studied and tested as relentlessly as written documents.

"The present work," says Mr. Cowan in his preface, "is not free from faults and blemishes, for no work on this subject can be so on account of the imperfect nature of the material we have to draw upon." In this estimate of his book no critic will venture to differ from Mr. Cowan, but we are inclined to think that there are faults and blemishes for which no imperfections of material can account.

W. F. TILTON.

History of Scotland. By P. HUME BROWN. Vol. II. From the Accession of Mary Stewart to the Revolution of 1689. (Cambridge: University Press. 1902. Pp. xiv, 464.)

THE notes of the Scottish Reformation are unanimity and idealism. The awakening of a national conscience was naturally followed by grave political results. But the peculiarity of the movement in Scotland was the profound conviction with which the majority of the nation accepted Calvinism and the devoted idealism of their attempt to put that system into practice.

The Treaty of Edinburgh assured the ultimate success of the new religion. The reformers broke the ancient alliance with France and turned to England whose help had enabled them to win out in their long struggle. Mary Stuart's attempt to maintain the two religions side by side failed. But the conflagration in which this failure involved Scotland, by removing the Queen, gave time and space for the diffusion of the new thought. Knox and Melville, Moray and Morton working in various spirits and for various ends organized the Kirk. And this Kirk was a new thing with its own constitution and its own infallible sanction, rooted in the unhesitating assent of a reflecting and intelligent people over whose life it exercised a strenuous supervision. This body confronted James Stuart when, in 1578, he began to govern the nation of which he conceived himself to be the divinely appointed ruler. It was no empty boast of Melville's that in Scotland there were two kings and two kingdoms.

James's religious convictions as well as his political ambition of uniting England and Scotland moved him so to remodel the Kirk as to allow of its being incorporated into the English establishment. Once master of the endowment of the ancient church he was able to promote his ends by playing on the cupidity of the nobles and the necessities of the reformed clergy. By 1612 he had established a modified form of episcopacy. The next move, the readjustment of rite and doctrine contained in the Five Articles of Perth, was made by "a dead lift of royal